



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

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ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE



Changing Prevalence?

+ Pole Systems Seasonal Notes

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Sandhill Cranes in Crex Meadows, WI.

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Bird's-Eye View is published to share the joy of backyard birds with All Seasons Wild Bird Store's customers and friends.

FEATURE ARTICLE

By Guest Contributor CAROL CHENAULT

POLE SYSTEM BASICS

SPRING IS A GREAT TIME TO PLAN AND INSTALL A BIRD FEEDING POLE SYSTEM.

Here at All Seasons Wild Bird Store, we carry Erva Pole Systems because they've been manufacturing quality bird feeding systems for over five decades, they offer the heaviest duty bird feeding hardware on the market, and they're made in the USA. I personally love this system because it is very versatile and can be added to as your hobby grows.

1) Select a pole height

Poles come in 80", 74" and 60" heights. The **80" pole** allows you to hang longer, tube-style feeders with sufficient clearance over a squirrel baffle. The **60" pole** is great for reaching a top-mounted, hopper-style feeder without a step stool. The **74" pole** works well for use with 2-, 3- or 4-arm tops, from which you can hang multiple feeders.



Use a 60" pole to be able to reach a top-mounted feeder

2) Select an anchor

The **twister** is a ground auger that twists 20 inches into the ground and includes a set screw to tighten against the pole to prevent wobbling. Another option is to use the **patio base**, which has a 24"-diameter and ½"-round cross



Twister ground auger



Patio base

bars. The center tube extends up 3 inches and accepts 1" poles. A set screw tightens against the pole to keep it straight. 14"-long anchors can be used to

stabilize the patio base when it is used in the yard. (continued on page 2)

Can't things just go back to normal?

If you pay any attention to current events, you've been hearing about supply chain issues, record setting inflation, interest rate hikes and more!

It seems that our more than two-year onslaught of a global pandemic has created quite a few imbalances that are affecting businesses and consumers alike.

Unfortunately, our stores have not been immune to many of these changes. We're continuing to experience supply issues for many of our products, mostly due to shipping and production delays. Things that we used to order and receive within a few days can now take months. It is improving, but it's improving slowly.

We are also seeing prices creep higher—along with every other industry—so don't be surprised if you're usual order costs a little bit more these days. We do our best to control consumer prices, but sometimes we just can't absorb all of the increases coming our way and need to adjust prices.

One big change you'll see, if you haven't already, is that we are out of Golden Safflower for the time being. Last year's crop was plagued by drought in Montana and the yield was terrible, which resulted in a huge shortage. We likely won't see any more Golden Safflower until the fall harvest of this year, so please be patient with us.

Our staff of experts continues to stay dedicated to providing all of our customers with a memorable shopping experience, which results in memorable bird feeding experiences at your respective homes. If you can't find something you need, we will do everything we can to help you find alternative solutions or source what we can in a reasonable time for you. Happy bird feeding!

~Al and Dave Netten

3) Select feeder attachments

Use a **feeder-mounting flange plate** to mount a feeder directly to the top of a pole. This works well for hopper or platform feeders.



Flange plate

For hanging feeders, install wrought iron arms made with 7/16" square steel. These arms come in **two-arm, three-arm or four-arm tops**. A **cardinal-shaped finial** adds a decorative touch!



4-arm top with cardinal finial

Add a **Quick Connect™ 24" hanger** in a branch-shaped style to provide extra perching space, as well as to provide additional spots to hang smaller feeders like hummingbird feeders. This arm wraps around the pole and installs without tools.



Quick Connect™ hanger arm

4) Add a baffle

A **domed-topped squirrel baffle** is a must! Install the baffle with its top 4½'-5' off the ground. This baffle keeps squirrels from climbing the pole and getting to your seed. The baffle is 16¾" tall and 6¼" in diameter.



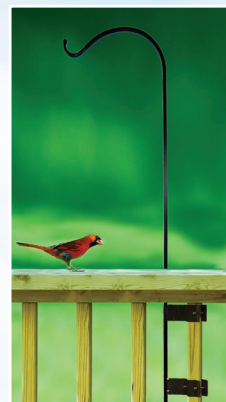
Squirrel baffle

5) Additional mounting options

Clamp-mount deck hangers tighten onto the top rail of a deck and include adjustable height, single-arm, or 2-arm styles.



Clamp-mount deck hangers



Baluster-mount porch hanger

Also available is a **baluster-mount porch hanger**, which clamps around the vertical bars of a deck or porch railing.

Both of these deck-mount poles allow you to hang your feeders near the house, bringing birds up close for excellent viewing. ■

For more information on pole system installation, our *Discouraging Squirrels* hand-out can be picked up in store or viewed on our website.



Join the Conversation!

Facebook.com/WildBirdStore

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CHANGING *Prevalence?*

Long-time birders everywhere can testify to ever-changing patterns of bird migrations, breeding and even habitats. Growing up in the '70s and '80s in Maple Grove, MN, our family was treated to a variety of bird species visiting our feeders and frequenting the area. But it wasn't until the early '90s that I can recall seeing Bald Eagles with regularity, and it was the late '90s when Wild Turkeys became common sights. Indeed, some bird species have become more prevalent in our area, including three species I'd never seen until more recent years: the Sandhill Crane, American White Pelican and Tufted Titmouse.



Sandhill Crane

The first Sandhill Crane I ever spotted was while en route to Itasca State Park in 2010. I initially assumed it was a deer, with its long legs and sandy-brown coloration. On closer inspection, I noticed its sizable bill, rusty-colored cap and

feathers. I surmised that it was a crane-like bird, but it took a check-in with my *Peterson Field Guide* to identify it.

Fast forward to present day—Sandhill Cranes are regular seasonal visitors to our area in and around White Bear Lake, MN. We hear their unmistakable *garoo-a-a* calls as they fly over our house during spring and fall migrations.

The Sandhill Crane population is making a slow and steady comeback after near decimation in the 1800s due to hunting and habitat loss. State and federal protections have helped the population in Minnesota grow from 40 to 50 pairs in the 1940s to over 15,000 today.

The best times to see Sandhill Cranes are during spring and fall migrations, when they gather in large numbers. In the spring (late March to May), Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area, near Forest Lake, MN, is reported to be a good place to view large numbers of cranes near the Twin Cities.

Around the fall migration (early September to mid-November), Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge and Crex Meadows Wildlife Area—just across the border in Wisconsin—are excellent places to visit.

And of course, keep your eyes peeled for these nearly 5-ft-tall beauties in corn fields, wetland areas and open prairies during the summer. They nest in small family groups throughout much of Minnesota, with the exception of southwestern part of the state.

American White Pelican

The first American White Pelicans I ever witnessed were gliding in unison over 35E in White Bear Lake in the autumn of 2010. Their white feathers sparkled in the sunlight, flickering in brightness as they turned direction as a group—it was mesmerizing! Black wing tips helped me make the identification when I arrived home. They hung around for weeks in the area, gathering on local lakes.

In subsequent years, the flocks returned to White Bear Lake a few times, and I've seen flocks overhead near downtown Saint Paul and

on the St. Croix River in Stillwater.

For over 7 decades, American White Pelican numbers had declined due to human activity and habitat loss. But conservation efforts and federal regulations are contributing to a comeback of these large, >5 ft white birds with black-tipped wings and a substantial bill.

Today, over 20% of the nation's American White Pelican population breeds in Minnesota, though mostly in outstate areas, including: Faribault, Meeker, Lac qui Parle, Cass, Lake of the Woods, Wright and Koochiching counties. Colonies in Marsh Lake have thousands of birds—up to 84% of the statewide breeding population.

Start looking up for flocks of migrating pelicans in the Twin Cities area starting in April. In the autumn, scan the skies, local lakes and ponds for pelicans any time between August and November.



Tufted Titmouse

I'd known of these darling, stone-gray relatives of the chickadee since



I was child—their sweet likeness appeared on all manner of bird-themed merchandise and knick-knacks. But I had always assumed that we didn't have them in the Twin Cities area—until one showed up at my feeder in White Bear Lake in 2018!

Upon some investigation, I learned that Tufted Titmice are pretty common in southeastern Minnesota, and occasional

visitors to the Twin Cities—including Dakota, Ramsey, Hennepin and Washington counties.

The Christmas Bird Count in the Northeast Suburban (Washington and Ramsey counties) area tallied 8 Tufted Titmice in 2021. Count coordinator Jim Howitz said that while the overall number isn't very high, he's noticed a trend of increased sightings over recent years.

Tufted Titmice visit bird feeders and will nest in bird houses. Up your odds of hosting one by keeping feeders filled, preferably with black oil sunflower seed or sunflower chips. ■

Photos by the author

Seasonal Notes

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT

March: WEEK BY WEEK



Song Sparrow



Yellow-rumped Warbler

Week 1

- ✓ March is the third snowiest month in MN. Meteorologists tell us spring begins on March 1 in Minnesota.
- ✓ Watch for early March migrants: **American Robins** (males return before the females), **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Canada Geese**, **Wood Ducks**, **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, **Eastern Phoebe**s and **Yellow-rumped Warblers**.
- ✓ **Canada Geese** pairs reclaim nest sites, but egg laying won't begin until there is open water nearby.
- ✓ **Dark-eyed Juncos** are still numerous and forage on the ground under bird feeders.
- ✓ **American Goldfinches** molt into their bright yellow spring plumage.
- ✓ **Wild Turkeys** begin their courtship as toms gobble, flair their tails and strut.
- ✓ Common snowdrops may be in bloom.

2nd Week

- ✓ Vernal equinox is March 20—the day astronomers tell us spring begins in the Northern Hemisphere.
- ✓ **Eastern Bluebirds** return—be ready for them with live mealworms.
- ✓ **Great Blue Herons** return to the edges of ponds and wetlands.
- ✓ March 11, 1878 was the earliest ice-out date for Lake Minnetonka. April 13th is the median date. **Common Loons** return to the area as soon as lakes are open.

Tips:

- ❑ Apply new **WindowAlerts** to patio doors and picture windows to prevent bird strikes.
- ❑ Provide nesting materials with **The Best Nest Builder**.



3rd Week

- ✓ FIRST OF THE YEAR sightings of **Killdeer**, **Song Sparrows**, **Brown-headed Cowbirds** and **Common Grackles**.
- ✓ **Eastern Chipmunks** are above ground and scurrying through yards.
- ✓ **Eastern Screech Owls** have eggs in the nest.
- ✓ **Northern Flickers** call.

Tips:

- ❑ Bring feeders to your neighborhood All Seasons store for cleaning—fees apply.
- ❑ Replace cracked feeders, which allow water to pool in bird seed and cause mold and mildew growth.

4th Week

- ✓ **Bald Eagles** are busy along the Mississippi River in the metro. Juveniles lack the signature white head and tail for up to the first four years.
- ✓ **Eastern Bluebirds** choose nest boxes. Do yours need replacing?
- ✓ It sounds like spring! **Red-winged Blackbirds** trill loudly and **Eastern Phoebe**s and **Song Sparrows** vocalize. **Ruffed Grouse** drum. Western chorus frogs call from grassy ponds and roadside ditches.
- ✓ **Canada Geese** incubate eggs.
- ✓ **Sandhill Cranes** and **Western Meadowlarks** return or migrate through the area and the first **Turkey Vultures** return.



Turkey Vulture

April: WEEK BY WEEK

Week 1

- ✓ April is our windiest month in MN. We've gained four hours of daylight since the winter solstice.
- ✓ Migrating female **American Robins** return, about a month after the males.
- ✓ **Tree Swallows** choose nesting sites.
- ✓ **Belted Kingfishers** and **loons** return to area lakes.
- ✓ **Wood Ducks** lay eggs.
- ✓ **Purple Martins** return as early as the first week of April.
- ✓ Black bears awaken. Protect your bird feeders!

Tip:

- ❑ Insects can be scarce in early spring. Provide **Pacific Bird Year-Round** or **Mealworm and Peanut Suets** for spring migrants.



2nd Week

- ✓ **Great Egrets**, **White Pelicans** and **mallards** return to open waters.
- ✓ **Chipping Sparrows** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** return to backyards.
- ✓ Returning migrants include **Fox Sparrow**, **Hermit Thrush**, and **Tree Swallows**.
- ✓ **Belted Kingfishers** make loud rattling calls.
- ✓ Painted turtles sun on logs to raise their body temperature and absorb vitamin D, both of which allows their food to digest.
- ✓ **Robins** build nests.



Hermit Thrush



Painted turtle

Tip:

- ❑ Rake up shell debris and dispose of in the trash while wearing a mask.

3rd Week

- ✓ **White-throated Sparrows** arrive and ground feed under feeding stations.
- ✓ **Barn Swallows**, **Yellow-headed Blackbirds**, **House Wrens** and **Brown Thrashers** arrive.
- ✓ **Broad-winged Hawks** return to the northland.
- ✓ **Mallards** nest.

Tip:

- ❑ Add a **deck rail-mounted birdbath**.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

4th Week

- ✓ **Eastern Bluebirds** incubate their first clutch of eggs.
- ✓ Rafts of **coots** return to area lakes.

Tips:

- ❑ Scrub birdbaths with 9 parts water and 1 part bleach, then use **Bird Bath Protector** to keep it clean.
- ❑ Use an **ant trap** (a moat filled with water) or **Nectar Fortress** to prevent ants from entering nectar feeders.
- ❑ Use no-mess seed and mixes such as **Medium Chips** and **Kracker Jax** for enjoyable bird feeding that leaves no shells to clean up.



Put out nectar and grape jelly feeders for hummingbirds and orioles during the last week of April!

Baltimore Oriole